



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LAZAR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

HEADQUARTERS

801-809 O ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

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No. 60.

PROGRESS OF EIGHT HOUR BILL

Washington, May 25.--The eight-hour bill passed by the house is now receiving the consideration of the senate. Numerous amendments have been offered which, if adopted, would destroy the efficiency of the bill. Senator Callinger of New Hampshire and Senator Lodge of Massachusetts are the two conspicuous senators desiring to amend the bill in a manner that would practically destroy its efficacy. Senator Lodge desired to insert a provision that where the Saturday half holiday was given, nine hours a day could be worked on five days of the week, with three hours on Saturday, and not be deemed a violation of the law. Senator Borah of Idaho, chairman of the senate committee on education, and labor, and who has charge of the bill on the floor of the senate, opposed Senator Lodge's amendment and, after a considerable discussion, the Lodge amendment came to a vote, resulting in it being defeated by a vote of 35 to 14. There has been one amendment agreed to providing that the provisions of the bill shall not apply "until January 1, 1915, as to any contract or contracts entered into in connection with the construction of the Isthmian Canal." This amendment is intended to leave conditions in statu quo during the completion of the Panama Canal. Another amendment was accepted relating to construction and repair of levees or revetments necessary for protection against floods, etc. The senators who voted for the Lodge amendment, which would practically destroy the bill, are as follows: Bradley of Kentucky, Bryan of Florida, Burton of Ohio, Dillingham of Vermont, Fletcher of Florida, Gallinger of New Hampshire, Lippitt of Rhode Island, Lodge of Massachusetts, McLean of Connecticut, Oliver of Pennsylvania, Richardson of Delaware, Root of New York, Sanders of Tennessee, and Wetmore of Rhode Island. From the vote upon this amendment it can be safely predicted that the eight-hour bill will pass the senate, retaining all of its effective features.

CEMENT WORKERS

San Francisco, May 25.--The American Brotherhood of Cement Workers has just issued three charters, one at Salt Lake City, Utah, one at Watsonville, Cal., and one at Olean, N. Y. The eight-hour day has been conceded to the Cement Workers in Muskegon, Mich.

ANTHRACITE MINERS ACCEPT

Washington, May 25.--At a convention of the anthracite mine workers, held in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., May 18 it was decided, by a vote of 323 to 64, to accept the agreement entered into by their sub-committee with the coal operators. Following this decision approximately 170,000 men will return to work almost immediately. The suspension of work took place on March 31, when the agreement entered into in 1909 expired. The advance secured is 10%, with the old sliding scale abolished. The increase will net about 5 1/2%. Other concessions contained in the agreement provide for grievance committees at all times, which shall have power to meet the officials of the coal companies and adjust complaints. Representatives of the miners' organizations are to have the privilege of meeting with the committees when they take up the grievances with the company officials. President White, after the decision of the convention, gave out the following: "This agreement insures the anthracite mine workers the highest rate of wages ever paid in the anthracite coal industry; the most improved conditions of employment; and was secured under the most unfavorable circumstances of any contract heretofore negotiated for the anthracite men. I am sure that now, after it is properly understood, the anthracite mine workers, as a body, will appreciate the work done by their representatives and will strengthen and prepare their organization for future usefulness."

BOOMING UNION LABELED GOODS

Washington, May 25.--To secure the attention of the public in a direct way the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union has kept upon the road for the last five years a traveling entertainment. The object sought was to bring forcibly to the attention of not only union men, but the public in general, the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union label. Every state in the union has been visited by this unique advertising feature and the results that have accrued have been pronounced. The chief feature of the entertainment consists of moving pictures depicting industrial scenes, together with the labels of various labor organizations, a lecturer taking care of the educational feature. In 1911 the union label department of the A. F. of L. adopted a similar plan and kept a number of people on the road a greater part of the year engaged in this educational work.

FAVORS SIX-YEAR TERM

Washington, May 25.--The judiciary committee of the senate has recommended the adoption of a resolution which has for its purpose the making of a six year presidential term and the incumbent of the office ineligible for re-election. The original draft also provided that the vice-president should also be disqualified for a second term, but this was not agreed to.

CHILD LABOR BILL SIGNED

Washington, May 25.--What is known as the uniform child labor law has been passed by both houses of the Arizona State Legislature and been signed by the governor.

BROTHERHOOD RAILWAY CARMEN

Kansas City, May 25.--The Brotherhood of Railway Carmen has just issued a charter for a local union at Sarnia, Ont., Canada.

CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS

Washington, May 25.--Senator Cummins' civil service retirement bill has been favorably reported to the senate. The bill is based upon the contributory plan of retirement. Provision is made for the deposit of the contributions of clerks in various banks upon which a stipulated amount of interest is to be paid. The bill provides that there shall be paid to every employe in the classified civil service at the time this act takes effect, except postmasters, who reach the retiring age in the service within twenty years after the act takes effect a further sum (besides contributions similar to those made by new employes) determined as follows: To each such employe who retires on account of age within one year after this act takes effect, \$3,000; to each such employe retiring thereafter at the age of retirement, \$5,000; less \$150 for each full year which shall have elapsed between the date this act takes effect and the date such employe so retires. The payments are to be made in each case in regular successive monthly installments at the rate of \$50 per month; provided, however, that if any such employe shall die after retiring from the service, and before he has received his full payment in monthly installments, the remaining sum shall revert to the treasury of the United States.

NOW UP TO STATE LEGISLATURES

Washington, May 25.--Secretary of State Knox has forwarded to the governors of all the states certified copies of the congressional resolution providing the states with an opportunity to vote on the proposed amendment to the constitution authorizing direct election of senators. The governors of the states are requested to bring the matter to the attention of the state legislatures for action. When the state department receives notice of ratification by three-fourths of the total number of states the amendment will be promulgated by the secretary of state, and will from then forward be a part of the constitution of the United States. There is no time limit within which an amendment must be ratified. The United States constitution provides that when the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states ratify any amendment proposed by congress it shall become a part of the constitution of the United States.

JOURNEYMEN STONE CUTTERS

Washington, May 25.--Secretary James F. McHugh of the Journeymen Stone Cutters' Association of North America states that 13 local organizations affiliated with the International have secured increases, averaging 50¢ per day per member, with a total increase for the year of over \$116,000 to 1,488 members. The securing of this large increase was attended with little friction and strikes of only a few days in one or two places.

KANAWHA DISTRICT AT WORK

Washington, May 25.--The 9,000 striking miners in the Kanawha coal field in West Virginia have returned to work. The scale committee succeeded in formulating a wage agreement which was ratified by the miners and operators. Under the new agreement the Kanawha miners will receive one-half of the increase stipulated in the United Mine Workers' wage scale and the semi-monthly pay day is to be restored.

PAPERMAKERS GET AGREEMENT

New York, May 25.--Organizer Hugh Brayne of the American Federation of Labor reports that after a conference lasting six days between the representatives of the different organizations employed in the paper making industry and the representatives of the International Paper Company, a joint agreement was reached on May 14 for a period of two years. The agreement provides for an increase in wages approximating \$250,000 per year. All overtime is to be paid for at the rate of time and a half. A minimum wage is established for all of the mechanical trades and an effective apprentice system is also incorporated. The agreement further provides for arbitration as a final determination of all grievances and disputes. This is a distinct victory for the trade agreement and insures to both employers and employees a period of industrial peace, with machinery adequate to meet all conditions which may arise in the future.

COURT SUSTAINS LIABILITY ACT

Washington, May 25.--The United States Supreme Court has handed down a decision holding that common carriers cannot set up "relief benefit contracts" as a bar to recovery for damages in cases of negligence. A brakeman in the employ of the Washington Terminal company lost his arm in 1908 in a collision between two engines in the yards at the union station. The suit for damages followed and the lower court held the section of the employers' liability act relied on for relief as unconstitutional. On appeal this decision was reversed, and another trial was had, which resulted in the court directing a verdict for the company on the ground that the company was not a common carrier. The court of appeals was appealed to again and that court ruled that the company was a common carrier. The United States Supreme court now finally settles the issue, by deciding the issues in favor of the injured brakeman, which carries \$7,500 in damages.

PROPOSED MINIMUM WAGE BILL

Portland, Ore., May 25.--A minimum wage bill which will permit no man over 20 years of age to work as a clerk, mechanic, railroad man, book-keeper or factory hand for more than ten hours a day nor more than six days a week, for less than \$2.50, has been prepared by direction of the State Federation of Labor and will be placed on the ballot in the coming November election. It is also proposed that women are not to be employed a greater period of time for a minimum wage of \$1.65 per day. Children under 16 are not to be permitted to labor for less than 15 cents per hour for not more than six hours per day, and then only in harvest time. Farm work is placed in another class with \$1.65 minimum per day, with board not to be charged in excess of \$4 per week.

TO PROTECT SEA TRAVEL

Washington, May 25.--Heavy penalties for failure to provide adequate life saving apparatus on ocean going steamships are provided in a bill introduced in the house by Representative Webb of North Carolina. Sufficient life boat accommodations for all passengers and crews of ocean going vessels of 3,000 tons or more are made imperative by the measure, which provides a fine of \$10,000 or ten years' imprisonment as a penalty for each violation.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Washington, May 20.--The bureau of immigration and naturalization has just issued its March immigration bulletin showing the number of immigrants landing at the various ports in the United States. As before noted in the News Letter the Italians coming from southern portion of Italy are still in the lead numerically, and it would appear that if this ratio is continued southern Italy will be depopulated. The number of Southern Italians landing during the month of March reached 19,044. Other nationalities coming to this country are as follows: Polish, 9,813; German, 6,092; Hebrews, 5,860; Greeks, 5,428; Croatians and Slovenians, 3,929; Northern Italians, 3,544. The remaining number of immigrants landing came from about 27 different countries. The total immigration for March was 91,165.

CARPENTER MOVEMENTS

Indianapolis, May 25.--The United Brotherhood of Carpenters reports that the mill men in Spring City, Pa., have secured an increase in wages from 28¢ to 30¢ per hour. After a strike of three days' duration the carpenters of Saskatoon, Can., gained an increase in wages of 5¢ per hour, the rate now being 50¢. The carpenters at Washington, Pa., secured a 10% increase in wages with every contractor in the city signing the agreement. In Fort Wayne, Ind., 33 out of 37 employers have signed an agreement with the local union for the union shop and a minimum wage of 40¢ per hour, which is an increase of 5¢ over the old rate. A strike was called on May 1, terminating one week later, and during the strike period the union made a gain in membership of over 100.

"ADVISORY RECALL"

Phoenix, Ariz., May 25.--A bill providing for an advisory recall of judges and United States Senators by majority vote of the people has been passed by the legislature of this state and the governor has expressed his approval. Under the terms of the bill an adverse vote will be considered as advice to the federal government to impeach and dismiss the judge or senator accused.

LOCKED OUT MEN WINNING

Portland, Ore., May 25.--The local electrical workers, who were recently locked out by their employers, has been successful in reaching satisfactory agreements with a number of the firms involved. In order that the men locked out may be provided with employment a co-operative company has been formed and has been successful in securing sufficient work to employ from 40 to 45 men steadily.

STREET RAILWAY MEN GET RAISE

Lewiston, Me., May 25.--Employees of the Lewiston, Augusta and Waterville street railway have been accorded an increase in wages of 70¢ per week.

SECURE EIGHT-HOUR DAY

Crieda, N. Y., May 25.--The hodcarriers and building laborers of this city have secured the eight-hour day after a strike lasting five days.

COST TO ENGINEERS HEAVY

London, May 25.--The Amalgamated Society of Engineers announces that they have found it necessary to require of their 124,000 members a levy of 6d each, in order to replenish the strike fund. The drain on the ordinary unemployed and sickness benefit fund of the society during the miners' strike, which cannot be replenished by the special levy, has been exceedingly serious, the great bulk of the membership being unemployed during this great strike. There was \$75,000 paid out, and at least \$100,000 more will have to be spent as benefits before the men all get back to work. The society will now undertake to create a huge fund in readiness for any future prolonged struggle.

STREET CARMEN MOVEMENTS

Detroit, May 25.--Local unions of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees in East Liverpool and Steubenville, O., recently submitted their wage controversies to a board of arbitration. An award has just been made in which both organizations secured an increase of 2¢ per hour. At Newell, W. Va. the motormen and conductors have also been successful in securing an increase of 2¢ per hour without friction. The men employed by the Electric Railway Company at Regina, Sask., have just organized a local union. The street car system in that city is owned by the municipality.

SPEECH BEFORE CONVENTION

Harrisburg, May 25.--President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor addressed the convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers on Friday afternoon, May 17. There were over 800 delegates present and gave close attention to the address. The officials of the engineers' organization some time ago invited Mr. Gompers to address the convention, and from the discussion which came as a result of the address by the Federation's president there is being developed a sentiment that the engineers should seriously consider the advisability of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor.

ENDORSE LABOR'S MEASURES

Harrisburg, May 25.--The convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, in session in this city, has given the endorsement of the organization to the legislation being sought in congress in the interest of labor. In a resolution adopted specific endorsement is given to the injunction limitation bill, which has passed the house and now before the senate. The convention also endorsed the immigration restriction bill and also the workmen's compensation bill now pending in congress.

VALUABLE STATISTICS

London, May 25.--During the month of March the total number of workmen engaged in all disputes was 1,400,542, and the aggregate duration in lost working days during March was 24,579,500, as compared with 463,500 in the previous month.

PROSPECTS GOOD FOR SETTLEMENT

Seattle, Wash., May 25.--Indications point to an early settlement of the lockout of the Shingle Weavers' union at Requiem, which has been on for nearly three years.

BREWERY WORKERS REJECT PENSIONS

Cincinnati, May 25.--The pension plan prepared by a joint committee of the United States Brewers' Association and the International Union of United Brewery Workmen to provide adequate compensation for injured workmen and for an old age pension, has been voted down by a referendum vote of the brewery workers. The vote was 22,936 against to 12,886 for. The plan was unanimously endorsed by both the United States Brewers' Association and the International Union of United Brewery Workmen's conventions, and it was confidently expected that it would receive endorsement by the membership, but the vote indicates that the view of the membership was overwhelmingly against the plan.

ARBITRATORS NOT YET SECURED

Washington, May 25.--No agreement has been reached as to the personnel of the five arbitrators which are to be appointed to decide the wage demands of the locomotive engineers on the fifty eastern railroads. The time has already expired for the selection, but the two already selected, one representing the railroads and one representing the engineers, have been allowed several additional days to reach an agreement as to the additional arbitrators. Provision is made for the appointment of certain public officials providing an agreement is not reached soon.

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS

Harrisburg, May 25.--The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has re-elected Warren S. Stone of Cleveland grand chief. The convention also provided for the appointment of four organizers. Heretofore this work has been performed by the assistant grand chief engineers, but these officials are now required to handle only executive work. An additional grand chief engineer was also provided for. The convention will probably remain in session the remainder of the month.

FREIGHT HANDLERS' STRIKE

Washington, May 25.--It is reported that the officials of the International Brotherhood of Railway Freight Handlers have ordered on strike the members of their unions in various sections of the country. This action came as a sequenceto the Chicago freight handlers' strike.

PRESSMEN'S STRIKE

Washington, May 25.--The Chicago Pressmen's strike is still on. The pressmen on the San Francisco Examiner, a Hearst publication, are out on order of the International president. Negotiations are in progress in Chicago with a view of reaching some understanding.

CASES AGAINST ORGANIZER DROPPED

Muscatoine, Ia., May 25.--All suits brought against Organizer Emmett T. Flood of the American Federation of Labor on allegations growing out of the button workers' strike have been dismissed at the request of the county attorney.

The teamsters employed by the city of Indianapolis, Ind., have organized a local union and the city council has granted an increase in wages.

COMMITTEE REPORTS FAVORABLY

Washington, May 25.--The committee on foreign affairs to which was referred the bill appropriating money to enable the president to propose and invite foreign governments to participate in an international conference to promote an international inquiry into the causes of the high cost of living throughout the world, and to enable the United States to participate in such conference, reported the same to the house of representatives and the report was referred to the committee of the whole house on the state of the union. This report will be taken up undoubtedly in a short time and disposed of.

----- AGAINST FIVE YEAR TERM

Washington, May 25.--The United States Civil Service Retirement Association, meeting in this city recently, entered an emphatic protest against the provision adopted by the house for a five year tenure of office in the classified service. All of the organizations in the postal service are against this provision and will endeavor by every means to secure its elimination when it comes before the senate for action. This provision was adopted by the house in passing the legislative, judicial and executive appropriation bill.

----- BAKERS WIN FIGHT

San Francisco, May 25.--About 200 bakers employed in the Latin bakeries in this city quit work because their employers refused to grant Saturday as the weekly day of rest. After a short contest a settlement was reached whereby the master bakers conceded the demands of the bakers with only one or two exceptions, and the bakers are again at work. The bakers have had a hard and long struggle to perfect an organization among the Latin bakeries, but the recent contest permanently establishes the union.

----- CIGARMAKERS' CONVENTION

Chicago, May 25.--The referendum vote recently taken by the membership of the Cigarmakers' International union on the holding of a convention resulted favorably. The convention will be held in Baltimore, Md., beginning the third Tuesday in September. This will be the first convention to be held in 16 years, and no doubt will be attended by delegates from practically every local organization attached to the international.

----- DIE CUTTERS ON STRIKE

Chicago, Ill., May 25.--All the members of the local union affiliated with the International Union of Cutting Die and Cutter Makers have been on strike since May 1 for the 48 hour week. The employers have declared for the open shop. There has not been a single desertion since the opening of the strike and indications are to the effect that a settlement will be reached before long.

----- ITALY ENFRANCHISES ILLITERATES

Rome, May 25.--The chamber of deputies has passed a bill extending the franchise to illiterates over 30 years of age. This increases the number of voters by 5,000,000.

GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC STRIKE

Winnipeg, May 25.--The strike of the boilermakers and machinists on the Grand Trunk Pacific, which began October 10, 1911, is still being prosecuted with vigor. A large number of strike breakers have been employed, but the company is having serious difficulty in keeping up its motive power. Recently there has been an agitation among the other trades to assist the two organizations involved, owing to the fact that indications point to the company attacking the other organizations on the system. The minister of labor has been appealed to, to secure a conference with the hope that an understanding can be arrived at and the dispute settled.

CARPETMAKERS' STRIKE

Philadelphia, May 25.--The Tapestry and Axminster Workers are on strike in the Overbrook Carpet Company. The tapestry workers struck against an attempt to reduce their wages 20% and 50%. The Axminster workers demanded an increase in wages equal to that paid by other manufacturers in this city for the same kind of work.

INITIATE AMENDMENTS

Fort Smith, Ark., May 25.--The farmers' organizations and the trade unions have initiated a petition and secured the necessary signatures to place upon the ballot in the general election in September amendments for the recall of public officials and for the establishment of a school text book commission.

PAINTERS WIN STRIKE

Worcester, Mass., May 25.--Members of the Painters' union who have been on strike some weeks for a 44-hour week and an increase in pay, have won a decided victory and returned to work. The agreement reached provides for the 44-hour week and an increase from \$19.50 to \$20, the agreement to run for five years.

THREAD OPERATIVES GET INCREASE

Pawtucket, R. I., May 25.--The 800 operatives in the finishing rooms of the J. & P. Coats Company thread mills in this city and Central Falls have been notified that their wages are advanced 10%, the same increase affecting 2,000 employes of the other departments.

CARPENTERS TO AMALGAMATE

Winnipeg, May 25.--The carpenters of this city, both Amalgamated and Brotherhood, have determined to amalgamate. The question has been practically settled and a meeting is scheduled for the purpose of working out the details of the amalgamation.

LONDON DOCK STRIKE

London, May 25.--This city is threatened with another serious dock strike. Five thousand lightermen are out. It is predicted that unless the dispute is soon settled 100,000 transport workers will become involved.

STREET CARMEN AFTER RAISE

Springfield, Mass., May 25.--The motormen and conductors on the Springfield and Worcester Consolidated Street Railway Companies are insisting on an increase in wages. A number of questions at issue have been agreed to. The present maximum rate of wages is 28¢ an hour and the employees are demanding 30¢. Besides the employees of the local and Worcester companies the same demand is being made by the trolley men in the Connecticut cities where the New Haven railroad has subsidiary lines. No final action has been taken by the union and apparently the men are planning to make a struggle.

PAPERMAKERS BOOMING

Holyoke, May 25.--For many years organizers of the American Federation of Labor and the officials of the Papermakers have worked assiduously to build up an organization. Success is finally crowning their efforts. Since the agreement reached with the International Paper Company and also the action of the American Writing Paper Company in announcing an increase in wages and that the eight hour day would be adopted, a heavy increase in membership is reported. It appears now that the employees in the paper-making industry fully realize the benefits which accrue from organization.

CONDUCTORS BOOST UNION LABEL

Oklahoma City, May 25.--The local organization of the Order of Railway Conductors of this city by resolution has taken a decided stand in favor of the union label on clothing. The chairman of the local committee of adjustments has been instructed that when passenger conductors are ordered to get new uniforms it must be insisted that the firms manufacturing the same must supply the union label. This is one of the important results being achieved through agitation by the Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor.

MOLDERS ON STRIKE

Auburn, N. Y., May 25.--Two hundred and fifty molders and coremakers of the No. 2 plant of the International Harvester Company are on strike. A new system of accounting was introduced by which the men claim their pay has been reduced. The strikers demand a nine hour day and retention of the old system.

ARBITRATION OF NEWARK STRIKE

Newark, May 25.--The laborers in this city who have been on strike for some time, have agreed to submit the differences which exist to a board of arbitration, the laborers having struck to enforce a demand of eight hours a day and a \$2 wage.

BALTIMORE GARMENT WORKERS

Baltimore, May 25.--On Sunday evening, May 19, the Garment Workers held a monster mass meeting in the Monumental theatre. President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor made the principal address.

With fifteen trade unionists in Congress results are being accomplished. Efforts should be put forth to elect fifteen more trade unionists.